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#14

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AN 'INTERVIEW' WITH

ELLEN G. WHITE

ON

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

Desmond Ford

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Q. Sister White, because so many people are asking me about Righteousness by Faith, may I seek your help? Firstly, is it wise to make so much of this topic? Cannot we be content with proclaiming our distinctive doctrines?

A. You will meet with those who will say, 'You are too much excited over the matter. You are too much in earnest. You should not be reaching for the righteousness of Christ, and making so much of that. You should preach the law.' As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa, that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God. We must not trust in our own merits at all, but in the merits of Jesus of Nazareth.

Review and Herald, March 11, 1890.

Some of our brethren are not receiving the message of God upon this subject. They appear to be anxious that none of our ministers shall depart from their former manner of teaching the good old doctrines. We inquire, Is it not time that fresh light should come to the people of God, to awaken them to greater earnestness and zeal? The exceeding great and precious promises given us in the Holy Scriptures have been lost sight of to a great extent, just as the enemy of all righteousness designed that they should be. He has cast his own dark shadow between us and our God, that we may not see the true character of God.

Review and Herald, April 1, 1890.

Some of our brethren have expressed fears that we shall dwell too much upon the subject of justification by faith, but I hope and pray that none will be needlessly alarmed; for there is no danger in presenting this doctrine as it is set forth in the Scriptures. If there had not been a remissness in the past to properly instruct the people of God, there would not now be a necessity of calling special attention to it. . . . The exceeding great and precious promises given us in the Holy Scriptures have been lost sight of to a great extent, just as the enemy of all righteousness designed that they should be.

Selected Messages, I, 372

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Q. Will not such emphasis on justification, etc., spark off controversy, and is not that dangerous?

A. The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people, should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what.

I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth, know not what they believe. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. They have no just appreciation of the work for the present time. When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance. And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe, but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weaknesses.

Testimonies to the Church, V, 707.

Q. But how can we free people from the power of Satan if we do not put first the distinctive truths which reveal his special errors?

A The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.

Gospel Workers, 161.

Every true Christian will be strong, not in the strength and merit of his good works, but in the righteousness of Christ, which through faith is imputed unto him.

SDABC, VII, 907.

. . . and this alone, - Christ's imputed righteousness, - makes you able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Sons and Daughters of God, 346.

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The very first and the most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the sinbearer, the sin-pardoning Saviour, making the gospel as clear as possible.
Evangelism, 264.

Q. But have not other religionists erred by preaching the gospel only and by neglecting the law? Are we to follow them?

A. If we would have the spirit and power of the third angel's message, we must present the law and the gospel together, for they go hand in hand. As a power from beneath is stirring up the children of disobedience to make void the law of God, and to trample upon the truth that Christ is our righteousness, a power from above is moving upon the hearts of those who are loyal, to exalt the law, and to lift up Jesus as a complete Saviour. Unless divine power is brought into the experience of the people of God, false theories and ideas will take minds captive, Christ and His righteousness will be dropped out of the experience of many, and their faith will be without power or life.

Ministers are to present Christ in His fulness both in the churches and in new fields, that the hearers may have an intelligent faith. The people must be instructed that Christ is unto them salvation and righteousness. It is Satan's studied purpose to keep souls from believing in Christ as their only hope; for the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin is efficacious in behalf of those only who believe in its merit, and who present it before the Father as did Abel in his offering.

The offering of Cain was an offense to God, because it was a Christless offering. The burden of our message is not only the commandments of God, but the faith of Jesus.
Gospel Workers, 161-162.

Q. What connection is there between righteousness by faith and the third angel's message?

A Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.
Review and Herald, April 1, 1890.

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Q. Do you mean to say that the best preparation for the Time of Trouble so soon to come is to understand righteousness by faith?

A. If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner.
Review and Herald, Nov. 22, 1892.

Q. I have always understood that our special emphasis should be on holiness. Will the proclamation of the truths about justification do this as effectively as preaching the law?

A. The present message—justification by faith—is a message from God; it bears the divine credentials, for its fruit is unto holiness.
Review and Herald, Sept. 3, 1889.

Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness. . . . The meager views which so many have had of the exalted character and office of Christ have narrowed their religious experience, and have greatly hindered their progress in the divine life. Personal religion among us as a people is at a low ebb. There is much form, much machinery, much tongue religion; but something deeper and more solid must be brought into our religious experience. . . . What we need is to know God and the power of His love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge. . . . Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character.
Testimonies to the Church, V, 742-744.

Q. Do many understand how righteousness is ~~only~~ to be found?

A. There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject justification by faith that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare.
Review and Herald, Sept. 3, 1889.

The small churches have been presented to me as so destitute of spiritual food that they are ready to die, and God says to you, 'Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.
Review and Herald, March 4, 1890.

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This I do know, that our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of righteousness by faith in Christ, and on kindred truths.
Gospel Workers, 301.

Q. Will not constant teaching on justification lead to careless living—a type of antinomianism?

A. No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.
The Desire of Ages, 555.

In the religion of Christ there is a regenerating influence that transforms the entire being, lifting man above every debasing groveling vice, and raising the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven. Linked to the Infinite One, man is made partaker of the divine nature. Upon him the shafts of evil have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ's righteousness.
Counsels to Teachers, 51,52.

The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness.
The Desire of Ages, 323,324.

When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the suffering of the Son of God.
Review and Herald, March 18, 1890.

Q. Many of your statements stress the necessity for effort. Are we not to instruct people to agonize, watch and pray?

A. There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favour. We must not trust at all to ourselves nor to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may

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find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Selected Messages, I, 353,354.

We can no more repent of sin without Christ, than we can be pardoned without Christ, and yet it is a humiliation to man with his human passion and pride to go to Jesus straightway, believing and trusting Him for everything which he needs. . . .

Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. Neither say that after you have done all you can on your part, Jesus will help you. Christ has said, "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5). From first to last man is to be a laborer together with God. Unless the Holy Spirit works upon the human heart, at every step we shall stumble and fall. Man's efforts alone are nothing but worthlessness; but cooperation with Christ means a victory. Of ourselves we have no power to repent of sin. Unless we accept divine aid we cannot take the first step toward the Saviour. He says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" (Rev. 21:6) in the salvation of every soul.

But though Christ is everything, we are to inspire every man to unwearied diligence. We are to strive, wrestle, agonize, watch, pray, lest we shall be overcome by the wily foe. For the power and grace with which we can do this comes from God, and all the while we are to trust in Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. Selected Messages, I, 381.

Q. Please sum up the meaning of Righteousness by Faith.

A. Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and "God is love." 1 John 4:16. It is conformity to the law of God, for "all Thy commandments are righteous" (Psalm 119:172), and "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 18.

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But that which God required of Adam in Paradise before the fall, He requires in this age of the world from those who would follow Him, - perfect obedience to His law. But righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Review and Herald, Sept. 3, 1901.

The atonement of Christ sealed forever the everlasting covenant of grace. It was the fulfilling of every condition upon which God suspended the free communication of grace to the human family. Every barrier was then broken down which intercepted the freest fulness of the exercise of grace, mercy, peace and love to the most guilty of Adam's race.

What is righteousness? It is the satisfaction that Christ gave to the divine law on our behalf.

Review and Herald, Aug. 21, 1894.

Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the sinner may feel that he is pardoned, and may know that the law no more condemns him, because he is in harmony with all its precepts. It is his privilege to count himself innocent when he reads and thinks of the retribution that will fall upon the unbelieving and sinful. By faith he lays hold of the righteousness of Christ. . . . Knowing himself to be a sinner, a transgressor of the holy law of God, he looks to the perfect obedience of Christ, to His death upon Calvary for the sins of the world; and he has the assurance that he is justified by faith in the merit and sacrifice of Christ. He realizes that the law was obeyed in his behalf by the Son of God, and that the penalty of transgression cannot fall upon the believing sinner. The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law.

Sons and Daughters of God, 240.

What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

Review and Herald, Sept. 16, 1902.

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Q. What is my part in receiving righteousness?

A. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light. He can say with rejoicing, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7).
Selected Messages, I, 367.

Many are confused as to what constitutes the first steps in the work of salvation. Repentance is thought to be a work the sinner must do for himself in order that he may come to Christ. They think that the sinner must procure for himself a fitness in order to obtain the blessing of God's grace. But while it is true that repentance must precede forgiveness, for it is only the broken and contrite heart that is acceptable to God, yet the sinner cannot bring himself to repentance, or prepare himself to come to Christ. Except the sinner repent, he cannot be forgiven; but the question to be decided is as to whether repentance is the work of the sinner or the gift of Christ. Must the sinner wait until he is filled with remorse for his sin before he can come to Christ? The very first step to Christ is taken through the drawing of the Spirit of God; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent.
Ibid., 390.

My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle going on in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength, and will finally become discouraged.
Ibid., 351.

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can

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claim His blessing, But these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to Him, just as we are—sinful, helpless, dependent.
Ibid., 353.

It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: "I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (Mark 2:17). I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised."
Ibid., 392.

All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" Rev. 22:17).
Ibid., 343.

Q. What are the worst and most likely errors of religious people?

A. Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. This is a fatal deception. If you would understand it, you must cease haggling over your pet ideas, and with humble hearts survey the atonement. This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus righteousness alone can avail.
Selected Messages, I, 343.

The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ's day was, that mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth has been proved to be sufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness. A jealous regard for what is termed theological truth, often accompanies a hatred of genuine truth as made manifest in life. The darkest chapters of history are burdened with the record of crimes committed by bigoted religionists. The Pharisees claimed

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to be children of Abraham, and boasted of their possession of the oracles of God; yet these advantages did not preserve them from selfishness, malignity, greed for gain, and the basest hypocrisy. They thought themselves the greatest religionists of the world, but their so-called orthodoxy led them to crucify the Lord of glory.

The same danger still exists. Many take it for granted that they are Christians, simply because they subscribe to certain theological tenets. But they have not brought the truth into practical life. They have not believed and loved it, therefore they have not received the power and grace that come through sanctification of the truth. Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a curse to the world.

The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God, and maintain a vital connection with Him.

The Desire of Ages, 309,310.

Q. Can believers achieve perfection in this life? Do not many of your own statements urge us to seek perfection?

A. If those who speak so freely of perfection in the flesh, could see things in the true light, they would recoil with horror from their presumptuous ideas. . . . And while we cannot claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul. Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. Thank God that we are not dealing with impossibilities. We may claim sanctification. We may enjoy the favor of God. We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our substitute. We are accepted in the Beloved. The Lord shows, to the repenting, believing one, that Christ accepts the surrender of the soul, to be molded and fashioned after His own likeness.

Selected Messages, II, 32.

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The more we contemplate the character of Christ, and the more we experience of His saving power, the more keenly shall we realize our own weakness and imperfection.
The Sanctified Life, 83.

Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.
Ibid., 7.

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.
None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ.
Acts of the Apostles, 651-652.

Let us remember that we are struggling and falling, failing in speech and action to represent Christ, falling and rising again, despairing and hoping.
Testimonies to the Church, IX, 222.

Are you in Christ? Not if you do not acknowledge yourselves erring, helpless, condemned sinners.
Testimonies to the Church, V, 48.

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Q. You often urge us to reflect the image of Christ. Will we ever have that in this life in an absolute sense?

A. . . . excellence of character [is] found in Him, which never had been found, neither could be, in another.
SDABC VII, 904.

Show that the life of Christ reveals an infinitely perfect character.
Testimonies to the Church, VI, 60.

Q. Have you ever summarized the opposite errors associated with teaching on justification?

A. There are two errors against which the children of God—particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace—especially need to guard. The first, already dwelt upon, is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith that can make us holy.
The opposite and no less dangerous error is, that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.
Steps to Christ, 59,60.(Pocket Companion Series)

Q. What was your own personal experience in this matter?

A. Read Life Sketches, 28-40 (the following are fragments of this passage.)

. . . I could not comprehend what was necessary in order to be fully consecrated to God. My Christian friends said to me: "Believe in Jesus now! This I tried to do, but found it impossible to believe that I had received a blessing which, it seemed to me, should electrify my whole being. I wondered at my own hardness of heart in being unable to experience the exaltation of spirit that others manifested. It seemed to me that I was different from them, and forever shut out from the perfect joy of holiness of heart.

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My ideas concerning justification and sanctification were confused. These two states were presented to my mind as separate and distinct from each other; yet I failed to comprehend the difference or understand the meaning of the terms, and all the explanations of the preachers increased my difficulties.

. . . the beauty and simplicity of trusting in God began to dawn upon my soul.

Faith now took possession of my heart. I felt an inexpressible love for God, and had the witness of His Spirit that my sins were pardoned. My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience. My heart went out toward Him in a deep and fervent love. Obedience to His will seemed a joy; it was a pleasure to be in His service.

. . . My whole endeavour was to do the will of God, and keep Jesus and heaven continually in mind. I was surprised and enraptured with the clear views now presented to me of the atonement and the work of Christ.

Q. Are we to think of ourselves as Protestants, or are we something different from both Protestantism and Catholicism?

A. Christ was a Protestant. . . Luther and his followers did not invent the reformed religion. They simply accepted it as presented by Christ and the apostles.
Review and Herald, June 1, 1886, 338.

Q. What is your counsel for all who teach and preach?

A. Dare not to preach another discourse until you know, by your own experience, what Christ is to you. With hearts made holy through faith in the righteousness of Christ, you can preach Christ, you can lift up the risen Saviour before your hearers; with hearts subdued and melted with the love of Jesus you can say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."
Testimonies to Ministers, 155.

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#16

ELLEN G. WHITE, THE LAW IN GALATIANS, AND THE LOUD CRY

Two world wars, about sixty minor ones, and prolonged global tragedy are the results of the failure of Seventh-day Adventist leaders in 1888 to understand the words of Paul in Galatians about law. This is the verdict implicit in such statements as the following:

> "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren (E.J.) Waggoner and (A.T.) Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world. (1 S.M. 234,235).

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In the G.C. Bulletin of 1893 (p. 119) we have the record of Sister White's statement to the effect that had we accepted the Minneapolis message we would have been in the kingdom within five years. On occasions the Lord's Messenger by pen and voice reminded the church that present world troubles are the result of our failure to walk fully in the light.

Yet it is not strange that Adventists should have had trouble in following E.J. Waggoner when he asserted that the law issue in Galatia was more moral than ceremonial. Raised up of God on the eve of an era of antinomianism, the special task of Seventh-day Adventists has always appeared to be that of defending the perpetuity of God's holy law. Any seeming threat to its binding obligation was naturally repudiated.

It was apparent to our doctrinal forefathers that the New Testament in places showed a decided opposition to law. e.g.

> Gal. 2:16 (RSV) Yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by

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works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified.

Gal. 2:19,21 (RSV). For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

Gal. 3:2, 11,12,13,24 (RSV). Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law; for "He who through faith is righteous shall live"; but the law does not rest on faith, for "He who does them shall live by them." Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us - for it is written, "Cursed be every one who hangs on a tree" - . . . So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith.

Rom. 6:14 (RSV). For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Rom. 7:4,6 (RSV). Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

Rom. 10:4 (RSV). For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.

2 Cor. 3:7-11 (RSV). Now if the dispensation of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such splendour that the Israelites could not look at Moses' face because of its brightness, fading as it was, will not the dispensation of the Spirit be attended with greater splendour? For if there was splendour in the dispensation of condemnation, the dispensation of righteousness must far exceed it in splendour. Indeed, in this case, what once had splendour has come to have no splendour at all, because of the splendour that surpasses it. For if what faded away came with splendour, what is permanent must have much more splendour.

The only way round this ugly fact of the New Testament's opposition to law seemed to be the declaration that most if not all of such texts applied to the ceremonial law. Just prior to 1888 G.A. Butler had written The Law in the Book of Galatians (1886) and men like J.H. Morrison were skilled at defending such a position in public debate. The Jones - Waggoner position therefore, that the issue in Galatians was not over the ceremonial law, but over the principle of law itself was anathema.

Who was correct? E.G. White, for a period, said she had not decided as to

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whether Waggoner in his statements about the nature of the law in Galatians was correct or false. But later she wrote:

> I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments. (SDABC. 6:1109).

> "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ . . . . (SDABC. 6:1110).

Despite Ellen White's delayed acceptance of the Waggoner position on law in toto she was wholeheartedly in agreement at Minneapolis that salvation could never be by law, and in later years the theme was repeated endlessly.

> As you look into the Lord's great moral looking glass, His holy law, His standard of character, do not for a moment suppose that it can cleanse you. There are no saving properties in the law. It cannot pardon the transgressor. The penalty must be exacted. The Lord does not save sinners by abolishing His law, the foundation of His government in heaven and in earth. The punishment has been endured by the sinner's substitute. SDABC. 6:1070).

E.G. White saw the great peril of legalism, which though the opposite of antinomianism, was similarly destructive. Again and again she warned against this peril:

> Let no one take the limited narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. This is a fatal deception. If you would understand it, you must cease haggling over your pet ideas, and with humble hearts survey the atonement.
>
> This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus' righteousness alone can avail. Christ is able to save to the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession for us.
>
> All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." No sin can be committed by man for which satisfaction has not been met on Calvary. Thus the cross, in earnest appeals, continually proffers to the sinner a thorough expiation. (SDABC. 6:1071).
>
> Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteous-

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> ness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness. (R.H. Nov. 4, 1890) (SDABC 6:1073).

The Reformers had much to say about the second use of the law, that thereby the sinner is led to feel his need of Christ and His merits. Ellen G. White often echoes this emphasis:

> "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ . . . .
>
> The law is broken but cannot pardon the transgressor. It is our schoolmaster, condemning to punishment. Where is the remedy? The law drives us to Christ, who was hanged upon the cross that He might be able to impart His righteousness to fallen, sinful man and thus present men to His Father in His righteous character. (MS 50, 1900). (SDABC. 6:1110).
>
> No one who believes in Jesus Christ is under bondage to the law of God; for His law is a law of life, not of death, to those who obey its precepts. All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan himself, unless they accept the atonement provided for them in the remedial sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is our atonement - at-one-ment with God. (SDABC 6:1077).

There is, however, beautiful balance in the position taken by Ellen G. White. While clear that the law cannot save the sinner she perceived also that we could not be saved without our minds and lives being brought into harmony with that law as a result of Justification and regeneration.

> God requires at this time just what He required of the holy pair in Eden, perfect obedience to His requirements. His law remains the same in all ages. The great standard of righteousness presented in the Old Testament is not lowered in the New. It is not the work of the gospel to weaken the claims of God's holy law, but to bring men up where they can keep its precepts.
>
> The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," is their cry; "only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do." While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. And the apostle John declares, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar." (RH Oct. 5, 1886).

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> The enemy has ever labored to disconnect the law and the gospel. They go hand in hand. (MS 11, 1895).
>
> We honor both the Father and the Son when we talk about the law. The Father gave us the law; and the Son died to magnify it and make it honourable. (MS 5, 1885).
>
> It is impossible for us to exalt the law of Jehovah unless we take hold of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. (MS 5, 1889).
>
> The law of Jehovah is the tree, the gospel is the fragrant blossoms and fruit which it bears. (Letter 119, 1897). (SDABC 6:1073).

It is thus evident that Ellen White, as well as the New Testament, is opposed to neither law nor gospel, but only to the wrong use of either. She recognized that the New Testament opposition to law was opposition to it as a method, not as a standard. The debacle at Minneapolis was the result of a wrong understanding of the relationship between the law and the gospel. The misunderstanding of men like Butler (absent yet influential) Morrison, and company was that of their forebears and was itself caused by the failure to understand the true nature of the New Testament message. Following 1888 E.G. White spelled out in great detail the errors implicit in the position of these leaders. Indeed, her particular emphases in the years succeeding 1888 reveal much more about the true situation at this historic Conference than any historical account could.

Lest any should question the fact that the understanding of our ministry regarding Righteousness by Faith was woefully defective prior to 1888 we give E.G. White's classic pronouncement on the subject which declares in effect that though she had attended thousands upon thousands of religious gatherings presided over by our ministers she had never heard Righteousness by Faith clearly taught amongst us before 1888.

> "I have had the question asked, what do you think of this light which these men (A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner) are presenting? Why, I have been presenting it to you for the last forty-five years, - the matchless charms of Christ. This is what I have been trying to present before your minds. When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas at Minneapolis it was the first clear teaching on this subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the conversation between myself and my husband." (MS 5, 1889, pp. 9,10)

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What then were the errors apparently cherished at Minneapolis which the Spirit of Prophecy highlighted in later years?

An imperfect recognition of human sinfulness as it exists both before and after conversion, and therefore "the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best efforts" (E.G.W.) An imperfect recognition of the infinite nature of the holy law of God and therefore the impossibility of man since the fall fulfilling it without the imputed righteousness of Christ.

> Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression . . . . This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works . . . . because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus' righteousness alone can avail. (SDABC 6:1071).
>
> All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan himself, unless they accept the atonement. (SDABC 6:1077).
>
> He who is truly seeking for holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements. (SL 81).
>
> The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. . .unless the Intercessor . . . presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. (1 SM 344).
>
> We are struggling and falling, failing in speech and action to represent Christ, falling and rising again, despairing and hoping. (9T. 222).
>
> It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen, and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. (SC 62).
>
> We make mistakes again and again. (TIMKH 136).
>
> . . . . when the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollutions of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness . . . . One ray of the glory of God, one gleam of the purity of Christ, penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct, and lays bare the deformity and defects of the human character.

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> How can any one who is brought before the holy standard of God's law, which makes apparent the evil motives, the unhallowed desires, the infidelity of the heart, the impurity of the lips, and that lays bare the life, - make any boast of holiness? His acts of disloyalty in making void the law of God, are exposed to his sight, and his spirit is stricken and afflicted under the searching influence of the Spirit of God. He loathes himself, as he views the greatness, the majesty, the pure and spotless character of Jesus Christ.
>
> When the Spirit of Christ stirs the heart with its marvellous awakening power, there is a sense of deficiency in the soul that leads to contrition of mind, and humiliation of self, rather than to proud boasting of what has been acquired. (RH, Oct. 16, 1888).
>
> The knowledge of the law would condemn the sinner, and crush hope from his breast, if he did not see Jesus as his substitute and surety ready to pardon his transgression and to forgive his sin. When through faith in Jesus Christ man does according to the very best of his ability and seeks to keep the way of the Lord by obedience to the Ten Commandments, the perfection of Christ is imputed to cover the transgression of the repentant and obedient soul. (FCE, 135).
>
> We have only a glimmering light in regard to the exceeding breadth of the law of God. (RH, Feb. 4, 1890).
>
> Repentance and sorrow for sin must be our daily meat and drink till mortality is swallowed up on life.
>
> Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness. (AA, 532).
>
> Righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ. (RH, Sept. 3, 1901).
>
> Through His imputed righteousness they are accepted of God as keeping all His commandments. (TM 37; Cf. DA 467).
>
> The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been - . . . .perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness . . . . If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous . . . . you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned. (SC, 62).

A similar failure in understanding at Minneapolis was probably with reference to the fact that salvation is entirely by grace from beginning to end, in sanctification as well as justification, and that human efforts at law-keeping at no point or in any degree contribute to our acceptance with God. Note E.G. White's warnings after 1888:

> It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. (1 SM, 392).
>
> No man of himself can repent, and make himself worthy of the blessing of justification. (1 SM, 390).

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> Some . . . fail of claiming as they should, the promises of God. . . . they are not ready to commit the keeping of their souls to Him, relying upon Him to perfect the work of grace begun in their hearts. While they think they are committing themselves to God, there is a great deal of self-dependence. There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temptation, and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith. Such persons toil to no purpose; their souls are in continual bondage, and they find no rest until their burdens are laid at the feet of Jesus. (1 SM 353).
>
> Nothing but His righteousness can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. We have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings, but have not received them because we have cherished the idea that we could do something to make ourselves worthy of them. We have not looked away from ourselves, believing that Jesus is a living Saviour . . . .
>
> We look to self, as though we had power to save ourselves; but Jesus died for us because we are helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness . . . .
>
> My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle going on in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength, and will finally become discouraged. (1 SM, 351).
>
> We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. (COL, 250).

Other misunderstandings apparently cherished by those who opposed Waggoner and Jones include the idea that repentance or faith have merit in themselves and procure spiritual credit for the human being participating in such exercises. In 1890 E.G. White wrote:

> Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature . . . . If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins. Salvation, then, is partly of debt, that may be earned as wages. If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him. (MS 36).
>
> We hear so many things preached in regard to the conversion of the soul that are not the truth. Men are educated to think that if a man repents

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> he shall be pardoned, supposing that repentance is the way, the door, into heaven; that there is a certain assured value in repentance to buy for himself forgiveness . . . . . There is danger in regarding justification by faith as placing merit on faith . . . . Jesus, they think, will do some of the saving, they must do the rest. They need to see by faith the righteousness of Christ as their only hope for time and eternity. (MS 36).

A related error was the concept that Justification applies only at the beginning of the Christian life and that Sanctification embraces the rest. This lends itself readily to the error that Justification only has to do with pre-conversion works and that after conversion our sanctified efforts must establish our acceptance with God. Ellen White has much to say in this regard also:

> Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness (AA, 532).
>
> Through His imputed righteousness they are accepted of God as keeping all His commandments. (TM, 37).
>
> The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascends from true believers . . . but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. (1 SM, 344).
>
> Jesus, they think, will do some of the saving; they must do the rest. They need to see by faith the righteousness of Christ as their only hope for time and eternity.
>
> . . . .they need the heavenly eyesalve that they might discern with astonishment the utter worthlessness of creature merit to earn the wages of eternal life . . . .all must be laid upon the fire of Christ's righteousness to cleanse it from its earthly odor . . .(MS, 36)
>
> . . . no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul. (1 SM, 366).

It should be observed that the errors apparently cherished at Minneapolis all have to do with a believer's standing before God, not primarily his state. Thus false ideas on sanctification spring from an inadequate view of justification. The idea of creature-merit, or earned acceptance at any stage, i.e., the concept of Pharasaism or the Galatians - self righteousness, lies at the root of most errors on Righteousness by Faith. These errors have sprung from our own innate depravity and our failure to understand such clear statements of Scripture as

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Rom. 3:20,28; 4:13-16; 9:3,4; 11:6; Gal. 2:21; 5:4. "If righteousness were through the law, then Christ died in vain." "You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law." "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." ". . .you have died to the law." "we are discharged from the law." (Such texts show that the law while still a perfect standard, can never give us a perfect standing. It is not, and never has been since the fall, a METHOD of salvation).

> The absence of devotion, piety, and sanctification of the outer man comes through denying Jesus Christ our Righteousness. (MS, 36, 1890).
>
> The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. (DA, 323).
>
> The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. (GW, 161).
>
> There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favor. We must not trust at all to ourselves nor to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart . . . . Every burden is light . . . Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seems shrouded in darkness becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. (1 SM 353-354).
>
> There are those who profess to serve God, while they rely upon their own efforts to obey His law, to form a right character and secure salvation. Their hearts are not moved by any deep sense of the love of Christ, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing. (SC, 44).
>
> . . . while we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification and redemption. We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but upon his own. 5 T, 472.
>
> Knowing himself to be a sinner, a transgressor of the holy law of God, he (the sinner) looks to the perfect obedience of Christ, to His death upon Calvary for the sins of the world; and he has the assurance that he is justified by faith in the merit and sacrifice of Christ. He realizes that the law was obeyed in his behalf by the Son of God, and that the penalty of transgression cannot fall upon the believing sinner. The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law. (SD, 240)

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> It is because of the imputed righteousness of Christ that we are accounted precious by God. (OHC, 53).
>
> The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ. (DA, 300).
>
> How then can we escape the charge, "Thou are weighed in the balances and found wanting"? We are to look to Christ . . . . Man, weighed against God's holy law, is found wanting. We are enlightened by the precepts of the law, but no man can by them be justified. Weighed and found wanting is our inscription by nature. But Christ is our Mediator, and accepting him as our Saviour, we may claim the promise, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."
>
> They may climb upon His merits and through His excellence and virtue receive from God an acceptance of their efforts to keep His law. (RH, May 31, 1870).
>
> When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. (1 SM, 382).
>
> Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness. (1 SM, 368).

Thus Ellen G. White again and again since Minneapolis emphasized the necessity of understanding justification as the only route to sanctification and the finishing of our task in the earth.

> The danger has been presented to me again and again of entertaining, as a people, false ideas of justification by faith. I have been shown for years that Satan would work in a special manner to confuse the mind on this point. The law of God has been largely dwelt upon, and has been presented to congregations, almost as destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His relation to the law as was the offering of Cain. I have been shown that many have been kept from the faith because of the mixed, confused ideas of salvation, because the ministers have worked in a wrong manner to reach hearts. The point which has been urged upon my mind for years is the imputed righteousness of Christ. I have wondered that this matter was not made the subject of discourses in our churches throughout the land, when the matter has been kept so constantly urged upon me, and I have made it the subject of nearly every discourse and talk that I have given to the people . . . . The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind, Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do. (MS, 36, 1890).

It is significant that E.G. White usually uses Justification by Faith and Righteousness by Faith interchangeably but this is not true of Sanctification by Faith and Righteousness by Faith.

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The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. (TM, 468).

The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness. (SDABC 6: 1073).

In order to meet the requirements of the law, our faith must grasp the righteousness of Christ, accepting it as our righteousness. Through union with Christ, through acceptance of His righteousness by faith, we may be qualified to work the works of God, to be colaborers with Christ. (i SM, 374).

The righteousness of Christ by faith has been ignored by some; for it is contrary to their spirit, and their whole life experience. Rule, rule, has been their course of action . . . . Men think they are representing the justice of God, but they do not represent His tenderness and the great love wherewith He has loved us. (TM,363).

Paul and his fellow-workers proclaimed the doctrine of Righteousness by Faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ . . . . And in the light of the cross, many who had never before known of the true God, began to comprehend the greatness of the Father's love . . . . "By the hearing of faith" they received the Spirit of God, and became "the children of God by faith in Christ." (AA 207-208).

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift of God is a precious thought . . . . That simple faith which takes God at His word should be encouraged. (GW, 161).

Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. (5 T, 744).

Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness. Let our faith rest upon this foundation. (Ibid. 742).

By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour . . . and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image. (Ibid, 744).

Let us compare the statement of 1 SM 234 with some similar ones:

Several have written to me enquiring if the message of Justification by Faith is the Third Angel's Message, and I have answered, 'It is the Third Angel's Message in verity'. (RH, April 1, 1890).

The loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole

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earth. (RH, Nov. 22, 1892).

> The Lord in his great message sent a most precious message to His people (Minneapolis 1888). It presented Justification through faith . . . it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God . . . . This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the Third Angel's Message which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. (TM 91,92).

> I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His word, they would today be in the heavenly Canaan. (G.C. Bulletin, Mar. 30, 1903).

> We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action. (Letter 184, 1901). (Evangelism, 696).

> Had our churches heeded the words of the Lord's messenger, given them by pen and voice, had they taken their position as true believers, we should have seen a most wonderful ingathering, which would have convinced the world that we have the truth . . . . But hindrances in the very midst of us have worked counter to the purpose of God. My heart is almost broken as I think of what the Lord has opened to me in regard to what might have been, but is not. (Letter W - 58, 1906).

When then is the essence of the message of Paul in Galatians perceived by Ellen G. White, Waggoner and Jones, and a small minority since? In summary it is that our Lord Jesus, the infinite God-Man, has accomplished our redemption and procured our righteousness "while we were yet enemies", and that a perfect standing before Him is a gift for the taking, irrespective of our multiplied failures before the Law. Furthermore, our continued status of perfection in heaven's sight remains independent of the Law, and is contingent only upon our relying whole-heartedly upon the merits of Christ alone. Such reliance will result in transformation of character, not in order to be accepted or to remain accepted, but because God justifies no one whom He does not simultaneously regenerate. The gift of the Spirit accompanies the gift of pardon. Therefore, he who dies with Christ also rises with Him. To willingly abide in sin is to declare that our profession is vain and that we are not justified. Nevertheless the righteousness of the saints is a robe woven in heaven's loom without one stitch of human devising, and any endeavour to earn merit before God is to separate ourselves from grace.

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We append inspired statements in support of this thesis.

Gal. 2:16,21 (RSV). Yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified.
I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

Gal. 3:2, 5, 11-13, 24,25 (RSV). Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?
Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?
Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law; for "He who through faith is righteous shall live"; but the law does not rest on faith, for "He who does them shall live by them."
Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us - for it is written, "Cursed be every one who hangs on a tree" - . . .So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian.

Gal. 5:4,6,18,22-25 (RSV). You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.
For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love.
But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law.
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Gal. 6:14-16 (RSV). But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God.

Christ was crucified, but in wondrous power and glory He rose from the tomb. He took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside, and restored the human race to favor with God. (YI, April 16, 1903).

. . .the law did not abate one jot of its justice, but through the atoning sacrifice, through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the repentant sinner stands justified before the law.

Christ bore the penalty that would have fallen upon the transgressor; and through faith the helpless, hopeless sinner becomes a partaker of the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust. Christ imputes His perfection and righteousness to the believing sinner when he does not continue in sin, but turns from transgression to obedience of the commandments. (RH, May 23, 1899).

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Thus, through the crucifixion of Christ, human beings are reconciled to God. Christ adopts the outcasts, and they become His special care, members of the family of God, because they have accepted His Son as their Saviour. (Letter 255, 1904; QD 670).

Christ received His death wound, which was the trophy of His victory, and the victory of all who believe in Him. These wounds annihilated the power of Satan over every loyal, believing subject in Jesus Christ . . . .The gates of the heavenly Paradise are thrown open to the inhabitants of this fallen world. Through faith in the righteousness of Christ, rebels against the law of God. Through faith in the righeousness of Christ, rebels against the law of God may lay hold upon the infinite, and become partakers of everlasting life. (Letter 103, 1894; QD 671).

The Lord made a full and complete sacrifice upon the cross, the shameful cross, that men might be complete in the great and precious gift of His righteousness. . . . All who will give up their hope of paying for their salvation, or earning it, and will come to Jesus just as they are, unworthy, sinful, and fall upon His merits, holding in their plea the pledged Word of God to pardon the transgressor of His law, confessing their sins and seeking pardon, will find full and free salvation. (Letter 148, 1897).

We cannot save ourselves. We cannot regenerate ourselves . . . . What is Justification by Faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. (TM, 456).

Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Jesus Christ, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by His Substitute and Surety . . . . Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God. . . . God's boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving. (SDABC 6:1070-1071).

Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness. (Ibid.- 1073).

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. (GW, 161).

Righteousness is love; and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

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> Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it. (TMB, 18).

> In their professed service to God, the Jews were really working for self. Their righteousness was the fruit of their own efforts to keep the law, according to their own ideas, and for their own selfish benefit. Hence it could be no better than they were. In their endeavour to make themselves holy, they were trying to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The law of God is as holy as He is holy, as perfect as He is perfect. It presents to man the righteousness of God. It is impossible for man, of himself, to keep this law; for the nature of man is depraved, deformed, and wholly unlike the character of God. . . . "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."
> . . . . The disciples of Christ must obtain righteousness of a different character from that of the Pharisees, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven. God offered them, in His Son, the perfect righteousness of the law. If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ . . . through God's free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires. (TMB, 53)

> My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle going on in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength, and will finally become discouraged. (1 SM, 351).

> Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing, but these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to Him, just as we are - sinful, helpless, dependent. (1 SM, 353).

> It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: "I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost." He says, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised. (1 SM 392).

> All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (1 SM, 394).

> The believer is not called upon to make his peace with God; he never has nor ever can do this. He is to accept Christ as his peace, for with Christ is God and peace. (1 SM, 395).

This revelation of God's unspeakable love in Christ in taking away the sins of all men before most were even born; His amazing patience whereby He does not withdraw the gift even when we fail "seventy times seven;" the transparent simplicity

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of salvation's only condition - "by faith alone;" the universal breadth of the invitation - "Whosoever will, may come;" the superabundant aid granted us in the word without, and the Spirit within, as well as His providence around, about, and under - this is the message to be proclaimed in the power of the Spirit, enlightening the earth with spiritual glory, just prior to the literal glory of the dawning Sun of Righteousness. May each of us receive it, be transformed by it, and proclaim it to His praise and honour before all worlds.

D. Ford.

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DR. FORD

DF 2265 #26

ELLEN G. WHITE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

It is certain that the writings of Ellen G. White contain a heavy emphasis on sanctification. Not only in the nine volumes of Testimonies for the Church is the law applied to the minutia and larger matters of the professing Christian's life, but in the volumes prepared particularly for the world as well as the church such as the Conflict of the Ages series, sanctification is an ever-recurring theme. The impression conveyed to one who has read widely in the E.G.W. works is that their author has much more to say about sanctification than about justification.

The reason for this is not far to seek. Ellen White lived in a world which was beginning to make little of the Law of God and which would, according to the light given her, increasingly make this error. She considered this church to be a reforming body with a special mandate from God to uphold the despised commandments of heaven.

But there is another reason. The task of every prophet was to probe the conscience of all professed worshippers of God. The law and the prophets go ever together and the work of the latter is to apply the former. To comfort the afflicted was indeed part of the prophet's duty, but more often we find the messengers of God afflicting the comfortable. This, no doubt, explains why so many of this class were menaced or martyred by their own people. The epistle by James is a typical example of a prophet of New Testament times probing the consciences of those professing righteousness.

Something else should be said regarding the work of a prophets. They were not systematic theologians. There is no instance of a prophet ever systematically laying down doctrinal summaries. The only writer in Scripture who set out apparently to fulfil this task was the Apostle Paul but closer examination of the epistles reveals that he did so only in one epistle and for only the Gospel itself —its nature and effects. RBF is the only doctrine Paul systematically formulated. Most of the possessors of inspiration wrote in emergency situations to meet urgent problems and this goes far to explain the form and content of their writings. Citations from former prophets, for example, are not always intended to be exegetical or exhaustive.

Furthermore, a distinction is made by E.G. White herself between her allotted mission and that of the canonical prophets. She was to be " a lesser light" pointing to "the greater light " of Scripture. It was no part of her task to lay down new doctrines. Thus repeatedly we find her saying in effect; "The Bible, and the Bible only is our creed." If we understood the Scriptures, she tells us, her writings would be unnecessary. On one occasion she strictly warned:

> Lay Sister White right to one side; lay her to one side. Don't you never, (sic) quote my words again as long as you live, until you can obey the Bible. When you take the Bible and make that your food, and your meat, and your drink, and make that the elements of your

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character, when you can do that you will know better how to receive some counsel from God. But here is the Word, the precious Word, exalted before you today. And don't you give a rap any more what 'Sister White said -- Sister White said this, and Sister White said that, and Sister White said the other thing." But say, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel", and then you do just what the Lord God of Israel does, and what He says. Spalding-Magan Collection, 167.

and again:

I dont want you ever to quote Sister White until you get your vantage ground where you know where you are. Quote the Bible. Ibid. 174.

We endeavoured to follow this admonition by a previous paper on "The Scope and Limits of the Pauline expression, 'Righteousness by Faith'". * Having done so we feel free to enquire as to the understanding given to the prophet of the remnant church. We set out our conclusions in a series of propositions in the succeeding pages. Each proposition is supported by quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy.

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1. Ellen G. White believed RBF to be the most important topic for Christian understanding and proclamation.

One interest will prevail. One subject will swallow up every other --Christ our Righteousness. I&H Extra Dec 23 1890

The sweetest melodies that come from human lips- justification by faith, and the Righteousness of Christ. R&H April 4 1895

The enemy of man and Christ is not willing that this truth (Justification by faith) should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. R&H Sept 3 1889

The foundation of Christianity is Christ our Righteousness 5T 725

The point which has been urged upon my mind for years is the imputed righteousness of Christ. I have wondered that this matter was not made the subject of discourses in our churches throughout the land, when the matter has been kept constantly urged upon me, and I have made it the subject of nearly every discourse and talk that I have given to the people. . . . The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind. MS 36 , 1890.

2. Ellen G. White believed RBF to be the central message of Seventh-day Adventists

Several have written to me enquiring if the message of Justification by Faith is the Third Angel's Message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity' . R&H April 1, 1890

The loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin, pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. R&H Nov 22 1892.

The Lord in his great message sent a most precious message to His people (Minneapolis 1888). It presented Justification through faith... it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. . . . This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. TM 91,92.

3. Ellen G White believed that when RBF was understood and rightly proclaimed the work would be finished. She declared that had RBF been accepted at Minneapolis the work would have been over by 1893 (General Conference Bulletin page 419) . Thus the blame for the delay in Christ's return is not to be placed upon God but upon ourselves for failing to understand rightly and to proclaim RBF.

(In) Gal 3:24. . .the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. . . . An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people in a large measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from

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obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.
1 SM 224

I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His Word, they would today be in the heavenly Canaan.
G.C. Bulletin. Mar 30, 1903

We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the childrenof Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action. Letter 184 1901 Evangelism 696

Had . . . our churches heeded the words of the Lord's messenger, given them by pen and voice, had they taken their position as true believers, we should have seen a most wonderful ingathering, which would have convinced the world that we have the truth. . . .But hindrances in the very midst of us have worked counter to the purpose of God. My heart is almost broken as I think of what the Lord has opened to me in regard to what might have been, but is not.
Letter W-58. 1905

The disappointment of Christ is beyond description. . . .Christ is humiliated in His people. R&H Dec 15 1904

4. Ellen G. White believed that the great majority of Seventh-day Adventists to be ignorant regarding the true nature of RBF.

Our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of RBF in Christ and on kindred subjects. G.W. 301.

What is it that constitutes the wretchedness, the nakedness, of those who feel rich and increased with goods? It is the want (lack) of the righteousness of Christ. . . . Could deception be greater? R&H Aug. 189

There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject that is so necessary to our eternal welfare. R &H Sept. 3, 1889

5. According to Ellen G. White the essence of RBF is that God has already accomplished through Christ our redemption and procured our righteousness "while we were yet enemies", and that a perfect standing before Him is a gift to be had for the taking. (The acceptance of Christ's work on Calvary will result in transformation of character, not in order to be saved, but because Christ has already saved us by taking our sin and guilt to the cross,after working out Himself a perfect robe of righteousness which is freely bestowed on all who believe.)

Christ was crucified, but in wondrous power and glory He rose from the tomb. He took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed topreside, and restored the human race to favor with God. Y.I. April 16, 1903

...the law did not abate one jot of its justice, but through the atoning sacrifice, through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the repentant sinner stands justified before the law.

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Christ bore the penalty that would have fallen upon the transgressor; and through faith the helpless, hopeless sinner becomes a partaker of the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust. Christ imputes His perfection and righteousness to the believing sinner when he does not continue in sin, but turns from transgression to obedience of the commandments.

R&H May 23 1899

Thus, through the crucifixion of Christ, human beings are reconciled to God. Christ adopts the outcasts, and they become His special care, members of the family of God, because they have accepted His Son as their Saviour.

Letter 255, 1904 QD 670

Christ received His death wound, which was the trophy of His victory, and the victory of all who believe in Him. These wounds annihilated the power of Satan over every loyal, believing subject in Jesus Christ. . . .The gates of the heavenly Paradise are thrown open to the inhabitants of this fallen world. Through faith in the righteousness of Christ, rebels against the law of God may lay hold upon the Infinite, and become partakers of everlasting life.

Letter 103, 1894 QD 671

The Lord made a full and complete sacrifice upon the cross, the shameful cross, that men might be complete in the great and precious gift of His righteousness. . . . .All who will give up their hope of paying for their salvation, or earning it, and will come to Jesus just as they are, unworthy, sinful, and fall upon His merits, holding in their plea the pledged word of God to pardon the transgressor of His law, confessing their sins and seeking pardon, will find full and free salvation.

Letter 148, 1897

We cannot save ourselves. We cannot regenerate ourselves. . . .What is Justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. TM 456

Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Jesus Christ, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by His Substitute and Surety. . . .Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God. . . . God's boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving.

SDABC 6:1070-1071

Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives , pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness. Ibid. 1073

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented;

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for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. G.W. 161

Righteousness is love; and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it. TMB 18

In their professed service to God, the Jews were really working for self. Their righteousness was the fruit of their own efforts to keep the law, according to their own ideas, and for their own selfish benefit. Hence it could be no better than they were. In their endeavour to make themselves holy, they were trying to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The law of God is as holy as He is holy, as perfect as He is perfect. It presents to men the righteousness of God. It is impossible for men, of himself, to keep this law; for the nature of man is depraved, deformed, and wholly unlike the character of God. . . " all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." . . . The disciples of Christ must obtain righteousness of a different character from that of the Pharisees, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven. God offered them, in His Son, the perfect righteousness of the law. If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ . . . through God's free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires. TMB 53

My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle going on in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength, and will finally become discouraged. 1 SM 351

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing, but these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to Him, just as are-- sinful, helpless, dependent. 1 SM 353

It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: "I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance". I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised. 1 SM 392

All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." 1 SM 343

In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous. 1 SM 394

The believer is not called upon to make his peace with God; he never has nor ever can do this. He is to accept Christ as his peace, for with Christ is God and peace. 1 SM 395

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Up until the middle eighties the subject of justification and righteousness by faith was practically untouched in Seventh-day Adventist periodicals and books, aside from occasional references by James White. This condition was aptly commented on by Ellen G. White in a camp-meeting address at Rome, New York, June 17, 1889, the year following the crisis regarding the subject, where Mrs. White spoke as follows:

"I have had the question asked, what do you think of this light which these men (A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner) are presenting? Why, I have been presenting it to you for the last forty-five years, - the matchless charms of Christ. This is what I have been trying to present before your minds. When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas at Minneapolis it was the first clear teaching on this subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the conversation between myself and my husband." (MS 5, 1889, pp. 9,10)

The foregoing quotation reveals that Mrs. White felt that the doctrine of justification by faith had been lost sight of generally, except by herself, her husband, and the men who spoke at the Minneapolis meeting. Research verifies her statements as they relate to the activity of her husband and others prior to 1888. It has been made evident that James White stood quite alone as a proponent of this doctrine during his lifetime.

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6. Ellen G. White believed that not only the laity but the ministry were largely ignorant of the real nature of RBF and that this had been so since the beginning of our message. Thus she could say that Waggoner and Jones were the first she had ever heard set forth what she herself had believed for the past forty years. (See Pease's By Faith Alone, p.113)

I have been shown that many have been kept from the faith because of the mixed confused ideas of salvation, because the ministers have worked in a wrong manner to reach hearts. MS 36

When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance. 5T 707

Some of our brethren have expressed fears that we shall dwell too much upon the subject of justification by faith, but I hope and pray that none will be needlessly alarmed; for there is no danger in presenting this doctrine as it is set forth in the Scriptures. If there had not been a remissness in the past to properly instruct the people of God, there would not now be a necessity of calling special attention to it. 1SM 372

The members of our churches are not incorrigible; the fault is not so much to be charged upon them as upon their teachers. Their ministers do not feed them.
Special Testimonies, No 10 Nov 1890

As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. R&H Mar 11 1890

7. According to Ellen G. White the rejection of RBF at Minneapolis is an instance of the ignorance of the real meaning of this truth by the ministry.

. . .the influence that grew out of the resistance of light and truth at Minneapolis tended to make of no effect the light God had given to His people thrugh the Testimonies . . . . If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind. What account will be rendered to God for thus retarding the work? G.C. Bulletin 1893, p. 419.

Unmistakeably, Elder Olsen (G.C. president) has acted as did Aaron, in regard to these men who have been opposed to the work of God ever since the Minneapolis meeting. They have not repented of their course of action in resisting light and evidence.

He (Elder Olsen) has not acted upon the light given. . .. as an unfaithful watchman, He is pursuing a course which is detrimental to his spiritual discernment, and he is leading other minds to view matters in a perverted light .
Letter to O.A. Tait Aug 27 1896

. . . .how long will those at the head of the work keep themselves aloof from the message of God ? R&H Mar 18 1890. *

(In TM 89-98 E.G. White speaks 35 times of the reaction of "those in

*FN. This quotation should not be taken as affirming that Elder Olsen was viewed by E.G. White as unfaithful throughout his entire ministry. There is evidence to the contrary.

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responsible positions" as still being resistance, rejection, despising, pouring contempt on, speaking against, unappreciating, refusing to accept, hating, not heeding, the "message".)

8. Even in the 20th Century E.G.White considered the matter unrectified.

Sometimes I have thought I would attend no more large gatherings of our people, for my messages seem to leave little impression on the minds of our leading brethren after the meetings have closed , although I bear a heavy burden, and go from the meeting pressed down as a cart beneath sheaves.

At this time when God's people should be bearing a plain, clear message, filled with earnestness and power, many who have been appointed to preach thetruth are departing from the faith.

Special Testimonies, Series B. No. 6. Jan 2 1903.

This thing has been acted and reacted for the last fifteen years or more, and God calls for a change. . . . Our standstill has got to come to an end; but yet every Conference, it is woven after the very same pattern. . . . Enough has been said; enough has been said over and over and over again, but it does not make any difference; they go right on just the same, professedly accepting it, but they do not make any change. . . ."You have lost your first love," you have lost it.

EG. White remarks . Battle Creek College Library April 1, 1901

These men who refuse to receive truth, interpose themselves between the people and the light. R &H Mar 18 1890.

The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world. Letter to Uriah Smith Letter 96, 1896. 1 SM 234,235

(These last quotations precede the dawn of the 20th century but they represent the situation of the following years as the succeeding statement shows.)

Had thorough work been done during the last General Conference (1901) at Battle Creek. . .there would have been one of the greatest revivals that there has been since the day of Pentecost.... Butthe work that all heaven was waiting to do as soon as men prepared the way, was not done; for the leaders closed and bolted the door against the Spirit's entrance.

Letter to J.H. Kellogg Aug 5 1902.

The result of the last General Conference has been the greatest, the most terrible sorrow of my life.

Letter to Judge Jesse Arthur Jan 15 1903.See also 6 T 104-5 106

My heart is almost broken as I think of what the Lord has opened to me in regard to what might have been, but is not. Letter W-58 1906

(None of these quotations should be understood as inferring that the Lord had left His people. Despite its failures and infirmities the church is still the apple of God's eye, the supreme object of Christ's regard.)

9. The real reason for the debacle at Minneapolis and the opposition of

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the ministry to Waggoner and Jones was the failure to recognize the relationship between the law and the gospel and the nature of Christ's relationsnip to the Law.

(Gal 3:24)

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith". In this Scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. . . . An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. 1 SM 234

10 This wrong understanding of the relationship between the law and the gospel had and has to do with:

a. An imperfect recognition of human sinfulness as it exists both before and after conversion, and therefore " the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best efforts" (EGW). b. An imperfect recognition of the infinite nature of the holy law of God and therefore the impossibility of man since the fall fulfilling it without the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. . . . This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. . . . .because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus' righteousness alone can avail. " SDABC 6:1071

All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan himself, unless they accept the atonement. 6 BC 1077

He who is truly seeking for Holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements. SL 81

The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to theheavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. . . unless the Intercessor. . . presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. 1 SM 344

We are struggling and falling, failing in speech and action to represent Christ, falling and rising again, despairing and hoping. 9 T 222

It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen, and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. SC 62

We make mistakes again and again. TIMKH 136

. . . .when the servant of Godis permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollutions of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness.. . . One ray of the glory of God, one gleam of the purity of Christ, penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct, and lays bare the deformity and defects of the human character.

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How can any one who is brought before the holy standard of God's law, which makes apparent the evil motives, the unhaolowed desires, the infidelity of the heart, the impurity of the lips, and that lays bare the life, —make any boast of holiness? His acts of disloyalty in making void the law of God , are exposed to his sight, and his spirit is stricken and afflicted under the searching influence of the Spirit of God. He loathes himself, as he views the greatness, the majesty, the pure and spotless character of Jesus Christ.

When the Spirit of Christ stirs the heart with its marvellous awakening power, there is a sense of deficiency in the soul that leads to contrition of mind, and humiliation of self, rather than to proud boasting of what has been acquired.

R&H Oct 16 1888

The knowledge of the law would condemn the sinner, and crush hope from his breast, if he did not see Jesus as his substitute and surety ready to pardon his transgression and to forgive his sin. When through faith in Jesus Christ man does according to the very best of his ability and seeks to keep the way of the Lord by obedience to the Ten Commandments, the perfection of Christ is imputed to cover the transgression of the repentant and obedient soul. FCE 135

We have only a glimmering light in regard to the exceeding breadth of the law of God.

R&H Feb 4 1890

Repentance and sorrow for sin must be our daily meat and drink till mortality is swallowed up on life.

Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness.

AA 532

Righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ . RH Sept 3 1901

Through His imputed righteousness they are accepted of God as . . . keeping all His commandments. TM 37. Cf DA 467

The condition of eternal life is now just what is always has been——.... perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. . . . If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. . . .you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned. SC 62

11. A similar failure in understanding has been withreference to the fact that salvation is entirely by grace from beginning to end, in sanctification as well as justification, and that human efforts at law-keeping at no point or in any degree contribute to our acceptance with God.

It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. 1 SM 392

No man of himself can repent, and make himself worthy of the blessing of justification. 1 SM 390

Some...fail of claiming as they should, the promises of God.. . . they are not ready to commit the keeping of their souls to Him, relying upon Him to perfect the work of grace begun in their hearts. While they think they are

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committing themselves to God, there is a great deal of self-dependence. There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temtpation, and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith. Such persons toil to no purpose; their souls are in continual bondage, and they find no rest until their burdens are laid at the feet of Jesus . 1 SM 353

Nothing but His righteousness can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. We have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings, but have not received them because we have cherished the idea that we could do something to make ourselves worthy of them. We have not looked away from ourselves, believing that Jesus is a living Saviour. . . .

We look to self, as though we had power to save ourselves; but Jesus died for us because we are helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness. . . .

My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle goingon in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength, and will finally become discouraged . 1 SM 351

We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heir-ship with Christ. COL 250

12. Similar misunderstandings include the idea that repentance or faith have merit in themselves and procure spiritual credit for the human being participating in such exercises.

Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature....If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins. Salvation, then, is partly of debt, thatmay be earned as wages. If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him. MS 36

We hear so many things preached in regard to the conversion of the soul that are not the truth. Men are educated to think that if a man repents he shall be pardoned, supposing that repentance is the way, the door, into heaven; that there is a certain assured value in repentance to buy for himself forgiveness.. . . There is danger in regarding justification by faith as placing merit on faith. . . . Jesus, they think, will do some of the saving, they must do the rest. They need to see by faith the righteousness of Christ as their only hope for time and eternity. MS 36

13 A related error is the concept that Justification applies only at the beginning of the Christian life and that sanctification embraces the rest. This

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lends itself readily to the error that Justification only has to do with pre-conversion works and that after conversion our sanctified efforts must establish our acceptance with God.

Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness. AA 532

Through His imputed righteousness they are accepted of God as keeping all His commandments. TM 37

The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers... but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. 1 SM 344

Jesus, they think, will do some of the saving; they must do the rest. They need to see by faith the righteousness of Christ as their only hope for time and eternity.

...they need the heavenly eyesalve that they might discern with astonishment the utter worthlessness of creature merit to earn the wages of eternal life. . . . all must be laid upon the fire of Christ's righteousness to cleanse it from its earthly odor. . . MS 36

...no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active , living faith that works by love and purifies the soul. 1 SM 366

14 It should be observed that these errors all have to do with a believer's standing before God, not primarily his state. Thus false ideas on sanctification spring from an inadequate view of justification. The idea of creature-merit, or earned acceptance at any stage, i.e. the concept of Pharasaism or the Galatians---self righteousness, lies at the root of most errors on RBF. These errors have sprung from our own innate depravity and our failure to understand such clear statements of Scripture as Rom 3:20,28; 4:13-16;9:3,4; 11:6; Gal 2:21; 5:4. "If righteousness were through the law, then Christ died in vain." "You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law. " " Ye are not under the law, but under grace". " . . .you have died to the law ". " we are discharged from the law". (Such texts show that the law while still a perfect standard, can never give us a perfect standing. It is not, and never has been since the fall, a METHOD of salvation).

The absence of devotion, piety, and sanctification of the outer man comes through denying Jesus Christ our Righteousness. MS 36 1890

The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart. THROUGH FAITH IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS . DA 323

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought.

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The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. GW 161

There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favor. We must not trust at all to ourselves nor to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart. . . . Every burden is light.. duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seems shrouded in darkness becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. 1 SM 353-354.

There are those who profess to serve God, while they rely upon their own efforts to obey His law, to form a right character and secure salvation. THEIR HEARTS ARE NOT MOVED BY ANY DEEP SENSE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing. SC 44

. . .while we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification and redemption. We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but upon his own. 5 T 472

Knowing himself to be a sinner, a transgressor of the holy law of God, he (the sinner) looks to the perfect obedience of Christ, to His death upon Calvary for the sins of the world; and he has the assurance that he is justified by faith in the merit and sacrifice of Christ. He realizes that the law was obeyed in his behalf by the Son of God, and that the penalty of transgression cannot fall upon the believing sinner. The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law. SD 240

It is because of the imputed righteousness of Christ that we are accounted precious by God. OHC 53

The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ . DA 300

How then can we escape the charge, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting"? We are to look to Christ.....Man, weighed against God's holy law, is found wanting. We are enlightened by the precepts of the law, but no man can by them be justified. Weighed and found wanting is our inscription by nature. But Christ is our Mediator, and accepting him as our Saviour, we may claim the promise, "Being justifed by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

They may climb upon His merits and through His excellence and virtue receive from God an acceptance of their efforts to keep His law. RH May 31 1870

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When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. 1 SM 382

Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness. 1 SM 368

15. Thus Ellen G. White again and again emphasizes the necessity of understanding justification as the only route to sanctification and the finishing of our task in the earth.

The danger has been presented to me again and again of entertaining, as a people , false ideas of justification by faith. I have been shown for years that Satan would work in a special manner to confuse the mind on this point. The law of God has been largely dwelt upon, and has been presented to congregations, almost as destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His relation to the law as was the offering of Cain. I have been shown that many have been kept from the faith because of the mixed, confused ideas of salvation, because the ministers have worked in a wrong manner to reach hearts . The point which has been urged upon my mind for years is the imputed righteousness of Christ. I have wondered that this matter was not made the subject of discourses in our churches throughout the land, when the matter has been kept so constantly urged upon me, and I have made it the subject of nearly every discourse and talk that I have given to the people. . . . The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind. Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do. MS 36

usually

16 It is significant that E.G. White uses Justification by Faith and Righteousness by Faith interchangeably but this is not true of Sanctification by Faith and RBF.

The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. TM 468 (Minneapolis referred to on the preceding page.)

The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinners account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. Thisis how faith is accounted righteousness. 6 BC 1073

In order to meet the requirements of the law, our faith must grasp the righteousness of Christ, accepting it as our righteousness. Through union with Christ, through acceptance of His righteousness by faith, we may be qualified to work the works of God, to be colaborers with Christ. 1 SM 374

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The righteousness of Christ by faith has been ignored by some; for it is contrary to their spirit, and their whole life experience. Rule, rule, has been their course of action. . . .Men think they are representing the justice of God, but they do not represent His tenderness and the great love wherewith He has loved us. TM 363

Paul and his fellow-workers proclaimed the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. . . . And in the light of the cross, many who had never before known of the true God, began to comprehend the greatness of the Father's love . . . ."By the hearing of faith" they received the Spirit of God, and became "the children of God by faith in Christ." AA 207-208

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift of God is a precious thought. . . .
That simple faith which takes God at His word should be encouraged. GW 161

Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. 5 T 744. Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness. Let our faith rest upon this foundation. Ibid 742. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour...and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image. Ibid 744

17. E.G. White, like Paul, uses the word "righteousness"in more than one way," for Christ's imputed merits which are perfect, and for imparted virtue which is not.

What is righteousness? ---It is the satisfaction that Christ gave the divine law in our behalf. R&H Aug. 21 1894.

Righteousness is obedience to the law. 1 SM 367

Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God; and "God is love." It is conformity to the law of God. . . . Righteousness is love and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him. TMB 23

Christ is our righteousness. 6Testimonies, 267

Righteousness is right doing... COL 312

18 As with Scripture, E.G. White distinguishes between the two phases of Christ's work ---that done for us , which is justifying, and that done in us, which is sanctifying. Both have to do with righteousness.

Christ works within us, and His righteousness is upon us. 1 SM 395

Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us. SC 63

19 Like Paul, E.G. White considered that that righteousness which is a relationship the chief theme for attention.

If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it

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must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. . . .The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind. Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do. MR 36. 1890

Every true Christian will be strong, not in the strength and merit of his good works, but in the righteousness of Christ, which through faith is imputed unto him. 7BC 907

. . .and this alone, --Christ's imputed righteousness, makes you able to stand against the wiles of the devil. SDG 346

The very first and the most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the sinbearer, the sin-pardoning Saviour, making the gospel as clear as possible. Evangelism 264

Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness . . . .

The meager views which so many have had of the exalted character and office of Christ have narrowed their religious experience, and have greatly hindered their progress in the divine life . Personal religion among us as a people is at a low ebb. There is much form, much machinery, much tongue religion; but something deeper and more solid must be brought into our religious experience . . . .What we need is to know God and the power of His love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge. . . . Through the merits of Christ , through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. 5 T 742-744

When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin. . . . R & H Mar. 18 1890

There is need of constant watchfulness,and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. 1 SM 353.

But though Christ is everything, we are to inspire every man with unwearied diligence. We are to strive, wrestle, agonize, watch,pray, lest we be overcome by the wily foe. For the power and grace with which we can do this comes from God, and all the while we are to trust in Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. 1 SM 381

It is Satan's studied purpose to keep souls from believing in Christ as their only hope; for the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin is efficacious in behalf of those only who believe in its merit, and who present it before the Father as did Abel in his offering. The offering of Cain was an offense to God, because it was a Christless offering. The burden of our message is not only the commandments of God, but the faith of Jesus. G.W. 161-162.

. . .the great center of attraction, Christ Jesus, must not beleft out. It is at the cross of Christ that mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness

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and peace kiss eachother. The sinner must be led to look to Calvary; with the simple faith of a little child he must trust in the merits of the Saviour, accepting His righteousness, believing in His mercy. G.W. 156,157

The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster.. . .This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers. G.W. 315.

When the free gift of Christ's righteousness is not presented, the discourses are dry and spiritless; the sheep and the lambs are not fed. Evangelism 186.

Christ and His righteousness--let this be our platform, the very life of our faith. R& H Aug 31 1905

19 Like Paul , when E.G. White links righteousness to faith it is most often its gift nature as exemplified in Justification that she has in mind.

PP 372; 5 T 384; C.W. 161-162; COL 311 ; 5 T744; 1 SM 158; 1 SM 374; FE 261-262; 1 SM 329,389; MYP 107; 1 SM 367; 5 T 229; TM 92; COL 310; 6BC 1096; 1 SM 241; Ev 596 1 SM 397; 3 T 371-372; GW 161; 1 SM 360; 7 BC 907; 1 SM 215; 6 BC 1071; ML 11; 7 B.C. 935; 1 SM 342 1 SM 331 ;PP 353; COL 169-70 etc.

20 As with Paul, E.G. White stresses that sanctification is the RESULT of receiving the gift righteousness by faith.

Justification by faith in Christ will be made manifest in transformation of character . 6 BC 1071

(The message of Waggoner and Jones) presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God TM 92

At the cross he (the sinner) leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ his character is transformed. The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust , and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As the sinner looks upon the Redeemer, he finds hope, assurance, and joy. Faith takes hold of Christ in love. Faith works by love and purifies the soul. 1 SM 349

God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart. . . Every burden is light; for the yoke which Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight. 1 SM 354

My ideas concerning justification and sanctification were confused. These two states were presented to my mind as separate and distinct from other other; yet I failed to comprehend thedifference or understand the meaning of the terms, and all the explanations of the preachers increased my difficulties....(Later) the beauty and simplicity of trusting in God began to dawn upon my soul. Faith now took possession of my heart. I felt an inexpressible love for God, and had the witness of His Spirit that my sins were pardoned. My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling me to a blind obedience. My heart went out toward Him in a

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deep and fervent love. Obedience to His will seemed a joy; it was a pleasure to be in His service. . . . My whole endeavour was to do the will of God , and keep Jesus and heaven continually in mind. I was surprised and enraptured with the clear views now presented to me of the atonement and the work of Christ. LS 25-40

Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul.. .. This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. . . .When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. . . . This is the genuine EVIDENCE of conversion . COL 311-313.

21. Again, as with Paul, E.G. White stresses that the resulting character of the penitent believer is not perfect righteousness in itself but only through the imputed merits of Christ's infinite righteousness.

After we have done all that we are capable of doing, we are then to say, We have done no more than our duty, and at best are unprofitable servants, unworthy of the smallest favor from God. Christ must be our righteousness, and the crown of our rejoicing . 3 T 526.

Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness. AA 532

They may climb upon His merits and through His excellence and virtue receive from God an acceptance of their efforts to keep His law. RH May 31,1870

Righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ. R&H Sept 3 1901

Through His imputed righteousness they are accepted of God as keeping all His commandments. TM 37

The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers...but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. 1 SM 344

22. In summary we would say that E.G. White agrees with Scripture in asserting that it is the freely bestowed (imputed) merits of Christ which constitute the Good News, or in other words, RBF. Sanctification, because ever incomplete and imperfect is not RBF but its inevitable fruits. Where sanctification is missing, justification has not been received. E.G. White would agree, we believe , with such comments as the following:

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. . . .on this hinge the controversy between us and the papalists chiefly turns in the article of justification, namely, whether the regenerate are justified before God to life eternal on account of their newness and works.. . . We acknowledge that the renewal is a very great benefit of the Son of God, the Mediator, through the Holy Spirit in us. We teach that the new obedience must follow after the reconciliation; and give to it, in its place, that which the Scripture given to it. . . . However, we have learned from Scripture that this dignity and glory, that they are our justification before God to life eternal, must not be given to our renewal and goodworks. For this dignity and glory belongs to the obedience, or righteousness, of the only-begotten Son of God, our Mediator, imputed to us through faith.. . . The Scripture denies to us and takes away from us the justification before God to life eternal...it demonstrates...that there is or inheres neither in nature nor in life nor in qualities, habits, or works of men in this life, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, regenerate or unregenerate, that by which they can so stand in the judgment of God that on account of it they may be justified to life eternal....And for the doctrine of justification solely through the grace, or mercy, of God, on account of the obedience of the one Mediator, Christ , it is necessary that it be removed and taken away completely from all the things which are, or inhere, in man, whether he be Jew or Gentile, regenerate or unregenerate.

Martin Chemnitz, Examination of the Council of Trent, part 1, page 492.

I conclude, then, "our persons are justified while we are sinners in ourselves." Our works, even the works of faith, are not otherwise accepted but as they come through Jesus Christ, even through his intercession and blood. 1 Pet 2:5; Rev. 8:3,4; 7:14,15. So then Christ doth justify both our person and works, not by way of approbation, as we stand in ourselves or works before God, but by presenting us to His Father by himself, washing what we are and have from guilt in his blood, and clothing us with his own performances. This is the cause of our acceptance with God, and that our works are not cast forth of his presence.

John Bunyan , Justification by an Imputed Righteousness, 68.

The righteousness by which we are justified is perfect but not inherent, the righteousness by which we are sanctified is inherent but not perfect; the righteousness with which we shall be clothed in the world to come is both perfect and inherent. Thomas Hooker.

(1) Without the continual return to justification, sanctification falls into Pharisaism and the wildest exaggeration. (2) When, however, we hold fast to the condemning and pardoning word of forgiveness, sanctification receives its true modesty and its true vitality.

The connection between the two (justification and sanctification) is actually so intimate that if one were to perish the other would be

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taken away and "where one remains and is rightly used, it also brings the other with it.". . . .The more truly we hold fast to the "God-for-us" , the more "our-being-for-God" grows and is strengthened. Again, where there is exercise in sanctification through faith, there will be a growing knowledge of sin and with it an increased desire for the gracious pardon of God for the sinner. But when one thus flows from the other, life from faith and faith again from life, disobedience from unbelief and unbelief from disobedience, when each thus requires and furthers the other and the lack of one hinders and destroys the other, then it is clear that in this part of theology we always need a twofold statement if we want to prsent the truth fully and completely. It is sure that since justification is the mother of sanctification the chief stress will always be on the word of forgiveness. But since the daughter "sanctification" though she cannot beget the mother "forgiveness" (i.e. justification) can destroy her, the significance of sanctification must be presented with all emphasis in evangelical preaching. . . . not a simple " both-and" but. . ."both-and also in particular." The immediate superiority of justification over sanctification requires such a clear statement of pre-eminence, but the terrible influence that disobedience exerts on faith also requires the addition of the second antithetical statement. (for) the Gospel must be protected as carefully against legalism as against antinomianism.

Adolf Koberle, The Quest for Holiness, 250,253.

And such as set forth also by Ellen White and Paul the Apostle is the everlasting gospel once for all given to the saints which is soon to lighten the whole earth with its glory. "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."---a gift which as Tyndale long ago declared: "maketh a man's heart to sing for joy and his feet to dance."

Special Note:

While we believe the foregoing summarizes the agreement of E.G. White with Paul on Righteousness by Faith, we would stress that there are places where Sister White uses such expressions as "the righteousness of Christ" in a non technical way, giving it a meaning which stresses the inevitable impact upon the life and character that faith in Christ brings.

Like James who seems so flatly to contradict Paul on Righteousness by Faith E.G. White also, in fulfilling her prophetic task of applying the law to professed believers sternly emphasized that faith without works is dead. and that those professing to have accepted Christ's righteousness should be full of good works. e.g. 3 T. 528 compare 6T 424.

Even when referring to the message of Minneapolis, Ellen White, as with Melanchthon after Luther, insisted that a real acceptance of Righteousness by Faith resulted in Jesus living within the believer, "fruitful unto good works". Such was ever to be the result of "the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit". TM 468.

TM 92 is significant as showing that justification is the receiving of the righteousness of Christ as a "priceless gift", but the reference is also important for its stress on the fact that such justification is always manifest in subsequent obedience. Undoubtedly, Ellen White saw, as did Melanchthon that the stress on "faith alone" as bringing righteousness could be abused. Like James there were times when she bent over backwards

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to prevent this. But when she gave an extended meaning to the technical Pauline expression of Righteousness by Faith this should never be used to define exactly what was originally meant by Scripture when it employed this vital phrase.

For Example, SDABC 1:1118 speaks of a righteousness of faith". We do not think that this should be equated with "the righteousness of faith". Had these two been identical E.G. White would have omitted the word "a" thus: "This is righteousness by faith".

If we wish to discover what E.G. White understood by Righteousness by Faith in its purity we must look to those statements which discuss it purposely and exhaustively rather than to mere allusions. This is in harmony with the fact that E.G. White like other inspired writers occasionally used a Scripture in more than one way, i.e. homiletically as well as exegetically. Her use of John 5:39 is a classic example.

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